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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 000217

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FROM AMCONSUL SURABAYA 0001  
DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, INR/EAP, DRL/PHD, INL, S/CT

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KISL](#) [KIRF](#) [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [ID](#)  
SUBJECT: MOLUKU: COMMUNITY POLICING AND CULTURE OF  
BROTHERHOOD REBUILD PROVINCE TORN BY CONFLICT

REF: SURABAYA

Classified By: DCM John Heffern. Reasons 1.4 (B and D).

¶1. (C) Summary: During the DCM,s recent visit to Ambon, interlocutors uniformly described the security situation in Moluku as "stable" and "very safe." Despite continuing concerns about the stress unemployment and poverty placed on local communities, our interlocutors suggested that the local population understood that conflict was not in their interest and that economic recovery depended upon cooperation. Security professionals, local government officials, academics, civil society, media contacts, and religious leaders all stressed the importance of community policing and strengthening the traditional "culture of brotherhood" as keys to maintaining security and rebuilding society and institutions. The Provincial Chief of Police, for example, pays regular visits to mosques and churches to explain policy and answer questions. Training and assistance programs aimed at improving human resource capacity, especially the professionalism of the security forces, were highlighted as critical needs. All dismissed the RMS (Republic of South Moluku) as meaningless, some suggesting it was a means of getting Jakarta,s attention and funds from Moluku groups in Australia; however the issue remains politically sensitive. The Chairman of the Provincial Parliament,s request for USG assistance to facilitate the return of Alex Manputty, RMS fugitive "president," received prominent local media coverage. End Summary.

¶2. (C) DCM, Surabaya Principal Officer, Naval Attache, Marine Attache, Jakarta Econ Officer, and Surabaya Pol-Econ Assistant traveled to Ambon, the capital of the Province of Moluku January 21-23 to discuss the current political situation and priorities for the future. Our interlocutors universally agreed that the current situation was "stable" and "very safe" and urged the U.S. to reevaluate its travel warning with respect to Moluku. Ambon would welcome U.S. tourists, students, teachers, and investors. New construction and rebuilding of churches, mosques, markets, and university buildings was evident throughout the city and surrounding villages. After years of prolonged sectarian conflict, the Governor and local officials are focused on addressing the problems of unemployment and poverty through investment in infrastructure and human resources and building community consciousness through communication and outreach. (Note: The impact of decentralization and economic development will be reported septel.)

All Moluku People Are Brothers

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13. (C) Maluku Governor Karel Albert Ralahalu credited utilization of the local tradition of "Pella Gandong" -- a culture of brotherhood -- as the key to restoring a sense of well-being to Maluku society. Under Pella Gandong, all of the people of Maluku are brothers, regardless of religion or ethnicity. The Governor also has a special role as the "king" or "eldest" in Maluku tradition to foster a sense of unity among communities. The Governor said he draws on these cultural traditions to encourage communities to support government policies to rebuild Maluku. The Governor noted that recent regency elections had been peaceful, and there was no reason to believe that the upcoming gubernatorial elections would cause increased tensions.

#### Rebuilding a Sense of Community

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14. (C) Mandagi, the Bishop of Maluku, and Rev. John Ruhulesin, Chairman of the Maluku Synod, explained that peace and security in Maluku was based on rule of law, social justice, power sharing, and economic improvements. They stressed that government policies must be based on grassroots justice where local communities build trust through dialogue and cultural connections with government institutions and other communities. The Bishop noted that much assistance was still needed, but international NGOs were reluctant to work with religious institutions because they are wrongly perceived as part of the conflict rather than part of the resolution. Both echoed local government requests for greater USG assistance and U.S. investment to strengthen Maluku's education system, economic development, and human resource capabilities.

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15. (C) Brig. Gen. Muhammad Guntur Aryadi, the Provincial Chief of Police (Kapolda), provided statistical data to illustrate Ambon's security picture. In 2007, the police responded to just over 1,000 minor cases, usually involving fighting between drunken youths. Restaurants were again open 24 hours/day, demonstrating that the population was no longer afraid. Referring also to Pella Gandong, the Kapolda noted that traditionally Muslims and Christians lived in the same communities and supported each other. Muslims would help their Christian neighbors build churches, and vice versa. He added that the Council of Village Heads was also critical to restoring this sense of shared community.

#### Community Policing -- Reaching Out

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16. (C) The Kapolda credited community policing with reestablishing trust between local communities and the security services. He said the police meet twice a week with local community and religious leaders, including the Maluku Synod and the Maluku Ulama Council, in an effort to improve communication and address rumors before they have the chance to fester. When incidents between religious groups arise, the local leaders allow the police to handle it according to prevailing law and actively discourage their followers from taking the law into their own hands. The Kapolda makes a point of paying personal visits to local mosques and churches to meet directly with these communities and explain police policies. Rev. John Ruhulesin, Chairman of the Maluku Synod, praised the Kapolda's personal approach, noting that while it is easy for a Muslim Police Chief to visit a mosque, it takes time and effort to reach out to other communities. "Dialogue is his priority," and it is paying dividends by giving "certainty" to the people. Rev. John added that the Panglima (head of TNI) makes a similar effort.

17. (C) Asked when the Mobile Brigade (Brimob) had last been called upon to quell a conflict in Maluku, the Kapolda said that in November 2007 a land dispute between Christian and Muslim villages on the island of Seram had become violent,

severely injuring nine people. Brimob was deployed, blockading the conflict areas and arresting the perpetrators (the Muslims and two Christians). During Brimob,s two-month deployment, there were no additional incidents or casualties. The unit has since been withdrawn. The Kapolda noted that the Detachment 88 Crisis Response Team, which received USG training in Java, continued to train together as one unit since their return to the province. The Deputy Kapolda noted that this CRT was "a very effective team" and would remain as a single unit, rather than being deployed separately.

#### TNI-Police Cooperation

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18. (C) The Kapolda explained that the police and TNI worked cooperatively in Moluku. If the police request TNI assistance, TNI stands ready to help. To date, however, Brig Gen Guntur has not had to request TNI assistance. The TNI in Moluku is focused on protecting Indonesia,s territorial waters -- especially against illegal fishing and smuggling -- and training. Under Indonesian law, the Navy can seize fishing vessels in Indonesian waters, but will turn the vessel and its occupants over to provincial police for prosecution. The Kapolda noted that Moluku,s Maritime Police force would benefit from additional training and equipment, highlighting that Moluku would also like to receive the types of patrol boats recently provided to the North Sulawesi Maritime Police by the USG.

#### RMS -- Meaningless, Yet a Political Concern

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19. (C) While the RMS and its supporters were dismissed by all interlocutors as meaningless, all government officials made a point of raising the issue and their concerns about attempts to raise the RMS flag. The Kapolda, for example, noted that community policing had been effective in approaching RMS supporters concentrated on the island of Aburu. As a result, the villagers requested establishment of a small police post on Aburu. Rev. John suggested that some tried to stigmatize RMS as a Christian organization, but he insisted its motivation is ideological, not religious. Rev. John added that RMS supporters could raise funding from the Ambonese community in Holland just by sending a picture of a RMS flag raised in the jungle. Others suggested that raising the flag

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was a way for disenfranchised communities to get Jakarta,s attention. Chairman of the Maluku Parliament Richard Louhenapessy,s request for USG assistance to compel the return of Dr. Alex Manuputty, President of the RMS, to Indonesia received widespread local media attention.  
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